

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

A LETTER TO MY SON.

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I spent the afternoon writing a letter "to my son," to be hidden among these little clothes when I put them back after I have shown them to Mother.

So only to you, dear little book, will I confide what I have written. This letter, my dear son, will only come to your eyes if you have never looked upon your mother's living face — if when you came into the land of the living death closed the door that separated her from you forever.

Dear—dearest son, who, when you read this, will be coming into your own—I want to be with you now. The mother you have never seen, the mother you have never known — I want to come for just a minute into your life to tell you all you were to me in the long months I carried you next my heart.

Oh, my boy—my boy, I had such great hopes of you and now these hopes are coming to fruition. I only wanted you to be a good man, for being a good man is in your mother's eyes more successful than being great.

Perhaps in the years that have passed since I wrote this letter, another woman has come into your father's life. One you have learned to respect and love as mother. Dear, that is as it should be, but just let she who bore you and to whom you were to be the crown of her existence be your real mother, for at least the time you are reading this letter.

My dear son, I want you to remember that I always dream of you as a man—a man I might be proud of, with all your father's strength and some of my sympathy.

I want, when you love a woman and make her your wife, that you will give her more than the romantic sentiment that passes for love today.

"Until death do us part" Most women that I have known, sonny,

have regarded that sentence very seriously, until all love has been killed and their hearts broken.

It is so easy to do the big things for those we love, but it is the little things which make love and living bearable.

I find, dear son, that I am writing a plea for that girl that you will marry—that "daughter" I shall never see. I know you will love her, but just "loving," which, in a man's dictionary, means usually "wanting," is not enough. Keep her loving you, and to do this you will only need forbearance, sympathy and toleration.

"Oh, my boy—my boy—that I shall never hold—remember how I loved you; I am afraid I would have loved you more than I do your father, whom it breaks my heart to leave, make my crumbling dust to rise in pride because it has given to the world something which has made it better.

To do this, my boy, there is only one thing to remember, and that is—all the glory of fame that is won at another's cost, all the success that comes because one has never counted the cost to others, means nothing beside the life that is given to good deeds and friendly kindness.

My boy, my boy, at this moment your long dead mother is standing beside you, and although you may not feel it, she is clasping you to her heart.

Go, fulfill my hopes, my ambitions for you, and I shall not have died that you might live, in vain.

I know, little book, that Dick would think this very morbid, and I shall not tell him about it, but I guess I have put into a written prayer my hopes and fears.

I presume I shall be holding my boy in my arms before a wood fire and see this letter cracking in the blaze. In the meantime I have written it,